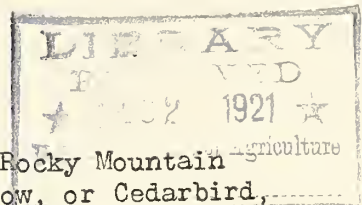


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DIRECTIONS FOR POISONING PINON JAYS

Methods of controlling damage to wheat and corn in the Rocky Mountain States, by the Pinon Jay, or Squawker, Pinon Squawker, Blue Crow, or Cedarbird, as it is variously known, are being investigated, and the Biological Survey presents herewith the results of the first season's study. No opportunity of experimenting was had where wheat was being damaged, but it is suggested that the poisoned bait described below be scattered on top of shocks and on the ground near them.

Corn is sometimes slightly damaged in the roasting-ear stage, but serious damage seldom occurs until it is ripe enough to be readily shelled off by the birds. Upon first entering a cornfield, the jays are likely to scatter, but within a few days they settle down in a definite section of the field and return again and again to that spot. This is the place to carry on effective poisoning operations, and until such a feeding area is well established, any poisoning campaign is quite sure to be a waste of time and money.

Pinon Jays are not protected by law either State or Federal, but in poisoning them care should be taken to comply with State and local regulations relating to the use of poisoned baits.

PREPARATION OF THE POISONED BAIT

Use as a base whole shelled corn, well cured and dry, if it can be had, and powdered strychnine alkaloid as the poison. The poison is applied to the outside of the grain in a mixture with starch paste. The proportions of these elements for varying quantities of bait are:

| Shelled corn | Strychnine alkaloid | Starch paste |
|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 5 quarts | 1/4 ounce | 1/2 pint |
| 10 " | 1/2 " | 1 " |
| 20 " | 1 " | 1 quart |

Make a starch paste by dissolving a teaspoonful of ordinary laundry starch in a little cold water and stir well as enough hot water is added to make the paste thin. To the quantity of strychnine required add a like bulk of starch paste and mix thoroughly; add the rest of the paste and stir. Pour this poison over the corn in a box or tub and mix thoroughly until the grains are evenly coated. Let the bait dry for a few hours or over night before using. Poisoned grain thus prepared can not be used in rainy weather.

DISTRIBUTING THE BAIT

The poisoned grain is best scattered by taking a handful at a time and, holding it either to one side or behind, letting it filter slowly through the fingers while walking at a moderate pace between the rows. One handful of shelled corn thus spread will cover about 40 linear feet in the row, and except in small fields poison scattered in every other row is sufficient. Usually 5 to 10 quarts of poisoned grain will cover the damaged section. Bait of whole shelled corn, thus scattered, will kill a maximum number of Pinon Jays with a minimum number of the smaller useful birds. It will not harm chickens or turkeys, nor is it likely that other farm stock will pick up enough of the poisoned grain so scattered to secure a fatal dose.

